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IN THE
UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE



Inventor(s): **Martha L. Lyons**

Confirmation No.: **6080**

Application No.: **09/774,727**

Examiner: **J. M. Corrielus**

Filing Date: **01-31-2001**

Group Art Unit: **2162**

Title: **CENTRALIZED CLEARINGHOUSE FOR COMMUNITY IDENTITY INFORMATION**

**Mail Stop Appeal Brief-Patents
Commissioner For Patents
PO Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450**

TRANSMITTAL OF APPEAL BRIEF

Sir:

Transmitted herewith is the Appeal Brief in this application with respect to the Notice of Appeal filed on 05-25-2005.

The fee for filing this Appeal Brief is (37 CFR 1.17(c)) \$500.00.

(complete (a) or (b) as applicable)

The proceedings herein are for a patent application and the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a) apply.

() (a) Applicant petitions for an extension of time under 37 CFR 1.136 (fees: 37 CFR 1.17(a)-(d) for the total number of months checked below:

<input type="checkbox"/>	one month	\$120.00
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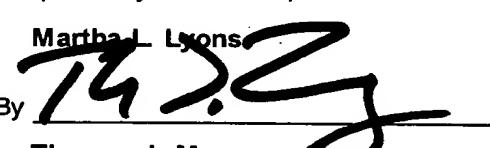
() The extension fee has already been filled in this application.

(X) (b) Applicant believes that no extension of time is required. However, this conditional petition is being made to provide for the possibility that applicant has inadvertently overlooked the need for a petition and fee for extension of time.

Please charge to Deposit Account **08-2025** the sum of **\$500.00**. At any time during the pendency of this application, please charge any fees required or credit any over payment to Deposit Account 08-2025 pursuant to 37 CFR 1.25. Additionally please charge any fees to Deposit Account 08-2025 under 37 CFR 1.16 through 1.21 inclusive, and any other sections in Title 37 of the Code of Federal Regulations that may regulate fees. A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed.

(X) I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the U.S. Postal Service as Express Mail, Airbill No. EV482712730US, in an envelope addressed to: MS Appeal Brief-Patents, Commissioner for Patents, PO Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450,
Date of Deposit: **July 25, 2005**

Respectfully submitted,

By 

Thomas J. Meaney

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Docket No.: 10007376-1
(PATENT)

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Patent Application of:
Martha L. Lyons

Application No.: 09/774,727

Confirmation No.: 6080

Filed: January 31, 2001

Art Unit: 2162

For: CENTRALIZED CLEARINGHOUSE FOR
COMMUNITY IDENTITY INFORMATION

Examiner: J. M. Corrielus

APPEAL BRIEF

MS Appeal Brief - Patents
Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Dear Sir:

As required under § 41.37(a), this brief is filed within two months of the Notice of Appeal filed in this case on May 25, 2005, and is in furtherance of said Notice of Appeal.

The fees required under § 41.20(b)(2) are dealt with in the accompanying TRANSMITTAL OF APPEAL BRIEF.

One copy of this brief is transmitted in accordance with 37 C.F.R. § 41.37.

This brief contains items under the following headings as required by 37 C.F.R. § 41.37 and M.P.E.P. § 1206:

- I. Real Party In Interest
- II. Related Appeals and Interferences
- III. Status of Claims

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I. REAL PARTY IN INTEREST

The real party in interest for this appeal is:

Hewlett-Packard Development Company, L.P., a Texas Limited Partnership, having its principal place of business in Houston, Texas.

II. RELATED APPEALS & INTERFERENCES

Applicant previously filed a Notice of Appeal on October 24, 2003, followed by an Appeal Brief on March 26, 2004. Applicant's March 26 Appeal Brief was a supplemental brief filed in response to a Notice of Non-Compliance issued on February 26, 2004. In lieu of filing an Examiner's Answer to the above-dated appeal, the Examiner re-opened prosecution of the underlying application and issued new grounds of rejection in a non-final office action on June 28, 2004. No decision was rendered concerning this previous appeal.

III. STATUS OF CLAIMS

A. Total Number of Claims in Application

There are 20 claims pending in application.

B. Current Status of Claims

1. Claims canceled: 0
2. Claims withdrawn from consideration but not canceled: 0
3. Claims pending: 1 – 20
4. Claims allowed: 0
5. Claims rejected: 1 – 20

C. Claims On Appeal

The claims on appeal are claims 1 – 20.

IV. STATUS OF AMENDMENTS

After the Examiner re-opened prosecution in this matter on June 28, 2004, Applicant filed a Response to Non-Final Amendment on September 28, 2004, that contained no proposed amendments to the claims. The Examiner rejected Applicant's arguments in a Final Office Action mailed on January 27, 2005. Applicant responded with a Response To Final Rejection on March 23, 2005, that also contained no proposed amendments to the claims. The Examiner again rejected Applicant's arguments in an Advisory Action mailed April 26, 2005, to which Applicant has filed this Appeal. The pending claims are enclosed herein as Appendix A.

V. SUMMARY OF CLAIMED SUBJECT MATTER

With regard to claims 1 – 8, the subject matter is a reputation authority (e.g., 20) for electronically storing reputation information for a user (e.g., 10 – 12). Example support may be found, at least, at Specification, p. 7, lns 23 – 26. The reputation authority includes a database (e.g., 201-1 – 201-N) for storing the reputation information and a communication system (e.g., 200) for transmitting and receiving the reputation information. Example support may be found, at least, at Specification, p. 7, lns 23 – 26, p. 8, lns 21 – 25, p. 9, lns 11 – 13. The reputation authority also includes security measures (e.g., 401, 408) that are used to verify the identities of any user or community organizations (e.g., 202) attempting to access

the authority. Example support may be found, at least, at Specification, p. 9, lns 8 – 14. Community organizations that access the reputation authority and request reputation information on a particular user will receive such information transmitted by the communication system responsive to an authorization received by the user in question. Example support may be found, at least, at Specification, p. 4, lns 20 – 22.

Claims 9 – 14 define a method for providing a centralized repository (e.g., 20) of identity attributes. Example support may be found, at least, at Specification, p. 7, lns 23 – 26. Prior to accessing the centralized repository, the identity of each associated user (e.g., 10 – 12) or accessing third party (e.g., 202) is verified (e.g., 401) in response to a request for access (e.g., 400). Example support may be found, at least, at Specification, p. 9, lns 8 – 14. Access is only granted if the identity is successfully verified as an authorized party. Example support may be found, at least, at Specification, p. 13, lns 16 – 17. In order to compile the collection of identity attributes, the centralized repository receives such attributes from the associated user, any accessing third parties, or both. Example support may be found, at least, at Specification, p. 12, ln 27 – p. 13, ln 9. This information is then stored in a database (e.g., 201-1 – 201-N) indexed according to the associated user. Example support may be found, at least, at Specification, p. 7, ln 27 – p. 8, ln 1. The centralized repository may then deliver identity attributes about various selected associated users to verified third parties in response to an authorization to do so received from the associated user. Example support may be found, at least, at Specification, p. 9, lns 15 – 27.

Claims 15 – 20 are means plus function claims that define a reputation management clearinghouse (e.g., 20) for managing reliability data. Example support may be found, at least, at Specification, p. 7, lns 23 – 26. The reputation management clearinghouse includes means for verifying the identity of any users (e.g., 10 – 12) or participating user communities (e.g., 201-1 – 201-N) prior to allowing access. Example support may be found, at least, at Specification, p. 9, lns 8 – 14. The means correspond to server 200 that may make use of such security technologies as digital certificates, passwords, handshake sequences, and the like. Example support may be found, at least, at Specification, p. 9, lns 11 – 14. There is also means for storing the reliability data that is entered by either or both of the users and participating user communities. Example support may be found, at least, at Specification, p. 7, ln 27 – p. 8, ln 1. The means for storing corresponds to server 200 and databases 201-1 –

201-N. Example support may be found, at least, at Specification, p. 7, ln 23 – p. 8, ln 3. The reputation management clearinghouse stores the reliability data associated with a particular user. Example support may be found, at least, at Specification, p. 7, ln 27 – p. 8, ln 1. This means for associating corresponds to server 200. Example support may be found, at least, at Specification, p. 7, ln 23 – p. 8, ln 3. The reputation management clearinghouse also includes a means for releasing selected reliability data to a participating user community responsive to consent given by the associated user. Example support may be found, at least, at Specification, p. 9, lns 15 – 27. This means for releasing also corresponds to server 200, such that server 200 will not allow access to any of the participating user communities unless it first has an authorization or consent from the user. Example support may be found, at least, at Specification, p. 9, lns 17 – 19.

VI. GROUNDS OF OBJECTION TO BE REVIEWED ON APPEAL

A. First Ground

U.S. Patent No. 6,092,197 to Coueignoux (hereinafter *Coueignoux*) is nonanalogous to the claimed invention and is, thus, not properly combined in the 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejection of record.

B. Second Ground

Claims 1 – 20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0046041 to Lang (hereinafter *Lang*) in view of *Coueignoux*.

C. Third Ground

U. S. Patent No. 6,572,014 to Lambert (hereinafter *Lambert*) and U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/003261 to Schuba (hereinafter *Schuba*) are nonanalogous to the claimed invention.

VII. ARGUMENT

A. First Ground

1. *Coueignoux* Reference Not Analogous to Claimed Invention

In order to rely on a reference as a basis for rejection of an applicant's invention, the reference must either be in the field of applicant's endeavor or, if not, then be reasonably pertinent to the particular problem with which the inventor was concerned. *In re Oetiker*, 977 F.2d 1443, 1446, 24 USPQ2d 1443, 1445 (Fed. Cir. 1992); *see also In re Deminski*, 796 F.2d 436, 230 USPQ 313 (Fed. Cir. 1986); *In re Clay*, 966 F.2d 656, 659, 23 USPQ2d 1058, 1060-61 (Fed. Cir. 1992) ("A reference is reasonably pertinent if, even though it may be in a different field from that of the inventor's endeavor, it is one which, because of the matter with which it deals, logically would have commended itself to an inventor's attention in considering his problem."); and *Wang Laboratories Inc. v. Toshiba Corp.*, 993 F.2d 858, 26 USPQ2d 1767 (Fed. Cir. 1993).

In *Wang Laboratories*, the Federal Circuit held that an invention directed to a single in-line memory module (SIMM) for installation on a printed circuit board for use in personal computers was not analogous to a SIMM for an industrial controller. Even though both inventions concerned SIMM modules in general, because their application and makeup were different, the cited reference was held to be nonanalogous. 993 F.2d 858 (Fed. Cir. 1993). In the present case, the *Coueignoux* reference and the claimed invention are even more different than the SIMMs discussed in *Wang*.

In the present case, both inventions involve computers at some level; however, that is where the similarity ends. The structure and function of *Coueignoux* is one of moderated communication between two parties. In *Coueignoux*, a sender (community organization) sends a request for information from a user (user) to an agent (reputation authority). Abstract. The agent then interacts with the user to obtain various information related to the sender's request. Col. 6, lns 30 – 63. The user must provide the agent with authorization to make the information public before the agent will forward that information back to the sender. Col. 6, lns 59 – 62. In contrast, the claimed invention provides a centralized reputation authority that may be accessed by both the community organization and the user. (Claims 1, 9, and 15) However, the reputation authority does not simply act as a moderated conduit for

communication between the community organization and the user, as *Coueignoux* teaches. Instead, the community organizations access the reputation authority to obtain reputation information. (Claim 1, 9, and 15) However, the reputation authority will not release that information unless the user has received authorization. (Claim 1, 9, and 15) The Examiner is simply picking a feature from a nonanalogous reference in order to provide a missing claim limitation. Therefore, *Coueignoux* cannot properly be combined with *Lang* under 35 U.S.C. § 103.

In determining analogy, the similarities and differences in structure and function of the inventions carry great weight. *In re Ellis*, 476 F.2d 1370, 1372, 177 USPQ 526, 527 (CCPA 1973) (The structural similarities and functional overlap between the structural gratings shown by one reference and the shoe scrapers of the type shown by another reference were readily apparent, and therefore the arts to which the reference patents belonged were reasonably pertinent to the art with which appellant's invention dealt (pedestrian floor gratings)); *In re Clay*, 966 F.2d 656, 23 USPQ2d 1058 (Fed. Cir. 1992) (Claims were directed to a process for storing a refined liquid hydrocarbon product in a storage tank having a dead volume between the tank bottom and its outlet port wherein a gelled solution filled the tank's dead volume to prevent loss of stored product while preventing contamination. One of the references relied upon disclosed a process for reducing the permeability of natural underground hydrocarbon bearing formations using a gel similar to that of applicant to improve oil production. The court disagreed with the PTO's argument that the reference and claimed inventions were part of the same endeavor, "maximizing withdrawal of petroleum stored in petroleum reserves," and found that the inventions involved different fields of endeavor since the reference taught the use of the gel in a different structure for a different purpose under different temperature and pressure conditions, and since the application related to *storage* of liquid hydrocarbons rather than *extraction* of crude petroleum. The court also found the reference was not reasonably pertinent to the problem with which the inventor was concerned because a person having ordinary skill in the art would not reasonably have expected to solve the problem of dead volume in tanks for refined petroleum by considering a reference dealing with plugging underground formation anomalies.)

In *Coueignoux*, the work flow is essentially a sender 4 requesting information from a user 7, and the user supplying information, some of which may be designated by the user as private. Col. 5. The user-provided information that is not designated as private is provided to the sender in response to the requests. Col. 6. This communication is moderated by an agent 14 located on the user computer interface 5 that will control or manage interaction with both parties and prevent any of the private information from being published to the sender. Col. 7. The sender interacts with a first computer 2 and network 3 that provides the interaction dialogs to be presented to the user. Col. 5. These interaction dialogs are presented to the user on the user computer interface 5. Col. 5. The agent 14 sends out all of the public information entered by the user to another transaction network 12 and transaction computer 11 that interacts with the sender. Col. 7. In contrast, the presently claimed invention provides a database for storing reputation information with security measures for verifying the identities of accessing users and community organizations. It also includes a communication system that will communicate the stored reputation information to a community organization when the user provides authorization. Therefore, the different structure and function of *Coueignoux* from the claimed invention supports Applicant's contention that the examiner improperly combined *Coueignoux* with *Lang*.

Based on the foregoing, Appellant respectfully submits that claims 1 – 20 are patentable over the 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejection issued by the Examiner. Reversal of the rejections is courteously requested.

B. Second Ground

Claims 1 – 20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Lang* in view of *Coueignoux*.

1. No Motivation to Combine the References

In order to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness, three basic criteria must be met. First, there must be some suggestion or motivation, either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art, to modify the reference or to combine reference teachings. Second, there must be a reasonable expectation of success. Finally, the prior art reference (or references when combined) must teach or

suggest all the claim limitations. Applicant contends that the Examiner has failed to meet his burden of proof and has, thus, failed to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness by failing to meet at least one of the above three basic criteria. According to the Federal Circuit, the suggestion or motivation to make the claimed combination and the reasonable expectation of success must both be found in the prior art, and not based on applicant's disclosure. *In re Vaeck*, 947 F.2d 488 (Fed. Cir. 1991).

The Examiner acknowledges that references cannot be arbitrarily combined to support a claim rejection. January 27, 2005, Office Action p. 9. Obviousness can only be established by combining or modifying the teachings of the prior art to produce the claimed invention where there is some teaching, suggestion, or motivation to do so found either explicitly or implicitly in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art. *In re Kotzab*, 217 F.3d 1365, 1370, 55 USPQ2d 1313, 1317 (Fed. Cir. 2000); *see also In re Lee*, 277 F.3d 1338, 1342-44, 61 USPQ2d 1430, 1433-34 (Fed. Cir. 2002) (discussing the importance of relying on objective evidence and making specific factual findings with respect to the motivation to combine references); *In re Fine*, 837 F.2d 1071, 5 USPQ2d 1596 (Fed. Cir. 1988); *In re Jones*, 958 F.2d 347, 21 USPQ2d 1941 (Fed. Cir. 1992). The test for an implicit showing is what the combined teachings, knowledge of one or ordinary skill in the art, and the nature of the problem to be solved as a whole would have suggested to those of ordinary skill in the art. *In re Kotzab*, 217 F.3d 1365, 1370 (Fed. Cir. 2000).

Without proper motivation or suggestion to combine, a proposed combination becomes merely arbitrary, which the Examiner has already admitted is improper. Moreover, the Federal Circuit, in *In re Vaeck*, held that the motivation or suggestion **must** come from the prior art and not the applicant's disclosure. *In re Vaeck*, 947 F.2d 488 (Fed. Cir. 1991) (emphasis added). *Lang* teaches an automated system for exchanging reputation information. [0005]. The *Lang* system stores reputation information about one or more parties and provides this information to clients of the *Lang* reputation service. [0022] – [0024]. *Lang* discusses security and safeguards throughout the specification. For example, safeguards may be provided to ensure that the reputation information is based on valid and reliable information. [0023], [0042]. Access to certain reputation information may be restricted to ensure only authorized persons can access the reputation information. [0023], [0042]. Also,

the communicated reputation information may be encrypted for additional security. [0024], [0042].

Coueignoux teaches an information gathering system. Abstract. In *Coueignoux*, a sender requests a user through an agent, to supply information using interactive scripts, again through an agent. Cols. 5 – 7. If this information is confidential or private, the user may indicate that the *Coueignoux* agent is not to publish that private information. Col. 6. Thus, any confidential information entered by the users of the *Coueignoux* system may not be published without the authorization from the user entering the information. Col. 6. The Examiner stated that, “One having ordinary skill in the art would have found it motivated to utilize such a combination in order to enhance security, thereby ensuring that the response is authorized or signed by the user.” Non-Final Office Action, p. 2.

As argued by Applicant in its previous response, the motivation asserted by the Examiner is neither found explicitly in the references nor *suggested* to one of ordinary skill in the art. Non-Final Response, pp. 8-9. Because *Lang* already discusses security measures, both for ensuring the reliability of the reputation information and for ensuring the authorization that a client has before accessing the reputation information, there is no explicit suggestion that an additional security measure of requiring an authorization by the party for which the reputation information is based, would be beneficial. In fact, *Lang* discusses occasions where some information that may be entered by a party may be invalid or unreliable when it is purely to bolster or disparage the party that the reputation information is associated with. [0047]

Additionally, one of ordinary skill in the art would not implicitly be motivated to combine *Lang* with *Coueignoux* either based on the teachings of those references or based on what those teachings might suggest in the knowledge generally available in the art. *Lang* teaches a repository for reputation information on a party that may be accessed by clients for obtaining this reputation information. [0005]. The purpose is to provide a reputation service where clients can have access to reputation information on certain parties. *Lang* describes security measures for ensuring that only authorized clients can access some reputation information. As noted above, *Lang* also describes security measures for ensuring the accuracy and reliability of the information that the reputation information is based on. One of

ordinary skill in the art would not be motivated to combine this *Lang* reputation system, with an additional security measure from *Coueignoux* that would require the reputation party to give authorization for the reputation information to be released to the requesting clients of *Lang*. One of ordinary skill in the art would easily recognize that this type of authorization, as described in *Coueignoux*, does not operate to enhance the security of the *Lang* system. Thus, the only motivation to make this combination comes from Applicant's disclosure, which the Federal Circuit has held to be invalid motivation.

Based on the foregoing, Appellant respectfully submits that claims 1 – 20 are patentable over the 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejection issued by the Examiner. Reversal of the rejections is courteously requested.

C. Third Ground

The references cited, but not relied upon by the Examiner, *Lambert* and *Schuba*, are nonanalogous to the claimed invention.

1. *Coueignoux* Reference Not Analogous to Claimed Invention

As noted above, in order to rely on a reference as a basis for rejection of an applicant's invention, the reference must either be in the field of applicant's endeavor or, if not, then be reasonably pertinent to the particular problem with which the inventor was concerned. *Oetiker*, 977 F.2d at 1446; *see also Deminski*, 796 F.2d at 230; *Clay*, 966 F.2d at 659; and *Wang Laboratories*, 993 F.2d 858.

The claimed invention deals, in general, with a reputation authority for electronically storing reputation information relating to a user, as disclosed in claim 1. *Schuba* is a method for authorizing remote transactions in which the user authorizes the package of information to be sent to the remote transaction authorization authority. [0005] – [0009]. *Schuba* was specifically intended for wireless devices in which it would be disadvantageous to transfer a large amount of data for transaction authorization over the wireless network. [0003] – [0004]. Thus, the underlying objects of each invention are completely different.

Lambert is a computer peripheral for transmitting security information, such as biometrics, along with other information in order to complete a remote transaction. Col. 15.

This computer peripheral is not even close to the same field of endeavor of the claimed invention. The object and underlying function of each invention are completely different. As explained above, the vast differences in the claimed invention and both *Schuba* and *Lambert* make them nonanalogous art. Therefore, neither *Lang* and *Schuba* nor *Lang* and *Lambert* can be properly combined to support a rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a).

VIII. CLAIMS – Appendix

A copy of the claims involved in the present appeal is attached hereto as Appendix A.

IX. EVIDENCE – Appendix

No evidence pursuant to §§ 1.130, 1.131, or 1.132 or entered by or relied upon by the Examiner is being submitted.

X. RELATED PROCEEDINGS – Appendix

No decisions have been rendered by a Court or the Board in any related appeals or interferences.

Applicant believes no fee is due with this response. However, if a fee is due, please charge Deposit Account No. 08-2025, under Order No. 10007376-1 from which the undersigned is authorized to draw.

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the U.S. Postal Service as Express Mail, Airbill No. EV482712730, in an envelope addressed to: MS Appeal Brief-Patents, PO Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on the date shown below.

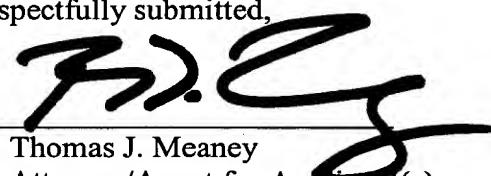
Date of Deposit: July 25, 2005

Typed Name: Susan Bloomfield

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Respectfully submitted,

By


Thomas J. Meaney
Attorney/Agent for Applicant(s)
Reg. No.: 41,990

Date: July 25, 2005

Telephone No. (214) 855-8230

APPENDIX A

Claims Involved in the Appeal of Application Serial No. 09/774,727

1. (Original) A reputation authority for electronically storing reputation information relating to a user comprising:
 - a database for storing said reputation information;
 - security measures for verifying identities of at least one of said user and a plurality of community organizations; and
 - a communication system for receiving said reputation information and transmitting said reputation information to said plurality of community organizations responsive to an authorization received by said user.

2. (Original) The reputation authority of claim 1 wherein said reputation information comprises at least one of:
 - information related to activities of said user;
 - information related to qualifications of said user; and
 - information related to reliability of said user.

3. (Original) The reputation authority of claim 1 further comprising:
 - a certification engine for certifying authenticity of said transmitted reputation information.

4. (Original) The reputation authority of claim 1 further comprising:
 - a reputation information classifier for grouping pieces of said reputation information into predetermined categories related to activities conducted with said plurality of communication organizations.

5. (Previously Presented) The reputation authority of claim 4 wherein said plurality of community organizations receives said reputation information in categories related to said activities conducted on said plurality of community organizations.

6. (Original) The reputation authority of claim 1 wherein said user authorization is provided by said user to said plurality of community organizations for retrieving said reputation information from said reputation authority.

7. (Original) The reputation authority of claim 1 wherein said user authorizes said reputation authority to transmit said reputation information to said plurality of community organizations.

8. (Original) The reputation authority of claim 1 wherein at least one of said user and said plurality of community organizations subscribes to said reputation authority in order to participate in said electronically storing reputation information.

9. (Original) A method for providing a centralized repository of identity attributes comprising the steps of:

verifying an identity of one of an associated user and an accessing third party responsive to a request to access said centralized repository;

receiving said identity attributes from at least one of said verified associated user and said verified accessing third party;

storing said identity attributes in a database indexed according to said verified associated user; and

delivering at least one set of said identity attributes to said verified third party responsive to an authorization received from said verified associated user.

10. (Original) The method of claim 9 wherein said storing step includes the step of:

categorizing said identity attributes into sets related to activities of said accessing third party.

11. (Original) The method of claim 10 wherein said at least one set comprises said sets related to activities of said accessing third party.

12. (Original) The method of claim 9 further comprising the step of: processing a request for said at least one set of identity attributes from said accessing third party, wherein said associated user provides said authorization to said accessing third party.

13. (Original) The method of claim 9 further comprising the step of: updating said stored identity attributes from at least one of said associated user and said accessing third party; and certifying said at least one set of said identity attributes.

14. (Original) The method of claim 9 further comprising the step of: registering at least one of said associated user and said accessing third party with said centralized repository of identity attributes for receiving prior to said verifying step.

15. (Original) A reputation management clearinghouse comprising: means for verifying an identity of one of a plurality of users and a plurality of participating user communities responsive to a request to access said clearinghouse; means for storing reliability data from one of said verified plurality of users and said verified plurality of participating user communities; means for associating said stored reliability data with an associated user; and means for releasing selected reliability data to one of said verified plurality of participating user communities responsive to consent given by said associated user.

16. (Original) The reputation management clearinghouse of claim 15 further comprising: means for updating said stored reliability data from at least one of said plurality of users and said plurality of participating user communities.

17. (Original) The reputation management clearinghouse of claim 15 wherein said means for storing includes: means for classifying said reliability data into groups related to activities of said plurality of participating user communities.

18. (Original) The reputation management clearinghouse of claim 17 wherein said selected reliability data comprises said groups related to activities of said plurality of participating user communities.

19. (Original) The reputation management clearinghouse of claim 15 further comprising:

means for processing requests for said selected reliability data from said plurality of participating user communities, wherein said verified one of said plurality of users provides said consent to said plurality of participating user communities.

20. (Original) The reputation management clearinghouse of claim 15 further comprising:

means for processing a request to deliver said selected reliability data from said verified one of said plurality of users, wherein said verified one of said plurality of users provides said consent to said reputation management clearinghouse

APPENDIX B

Evidence Involved in the Appeal of Application Serial No. 09/774,727

APPENDIX C

Related Proceedings Involved in the Appeal of Application Serial No. 09/774,727